



Shot Through Velvet

Ellen Byerrum

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Shot Through Velvet: A Crime of Fashion Mystery

Shot Through Velvet Details

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From Reader Review Shot Through Velvet for online ebook

Suspense Magazine says

Quick. What's your favorite color? If you answered blue, I have a must-read for you, especially if you're into vintage fashion, snappy dialogue and the softest, most sensuous fabric in the world. Did you guess? Well, it's velvet, of course.

Lacey Smithsonian, intrepid fashion reporter for that other Washington D.C. newspaper, The Eye, has a dream assignment. She's to cover the final days of the last remaining velvet factory in Virginia. The assignment is even more appealing because her main man, Vic Donovan, has been hired to coordinate factory security in the sleepy little town of Black Martin, Virginia. Lacey's first scheduled interview is with company official Ron Gibbs. Touring the factory on the final day of operation, Lacey finds more than fabric—she finds a body. A very blue body...as in dyed blue. All over. Sheesh. Workers nicknamed Ron Gibbs the Blue Devil and now he's very blue indeed. There goes the interview.

Rumors spread like wildfire that Ron's killer is the "Velvet Avenger", whose calling card is a length of blue, velvet ribbon left in the victim's hand. Heeding Vic's advice for once, Lacey tries to stay out of the investigation, but when the Velvet Avenger strikes on her own turf, at the offices of The Eye and the paper's publisher asks for her help in solving the crimes, Lacey has no choice but to get involved.

Great fun, with lots of interesting tidbits about the history of the U.S. fashion industry. I don't think I'll take that cute, little, black, velvet jacket in my closet for granted again.

Reviewed by Susan Santangelo, Author of "Retirement Can Be Murder" for Suspense Magazine

Deb White says

For some reason I struggled to finish this book. Maybe I have read so many of this type of book and the plot left me cold. Lacey Smithsonian is a reporter of fashion who gets involved with a dead body and "who done it". This time it is a body in a vat of blue dye in a velvet fabric manufacturer. Great description of the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria, VA!!

Gwen says

As always, Lucy Smithsonian's fashion tips are good ones, but contemplating the impact of American textiles disappearing from this country is profound. Good to see pride in some work (not including putting boss in vat of blue dye), sad to see shops closing and leaving the country. As always, good that Lucy's eye for fashion and detail helps corral the bad guys, especially if it means the Gorgon turns out to be a sweet and good future mother-in-law for Stella.

Renee says

I haven't read one of Byerrum's Crime of Fashion mysteries in years -- literally years, as I last read one of her books in 2009 -- and I was worried that I'd be disappointed. That, perhaps, the absence would cause me to

realize that her books weren't as good as I'd initially. thought.

I didn't need to worry about that.

Byerrum's Crime of Fashion mysteries aren't for everyone -- they're set in DC and star journalist Lacey Smithsonian who's still stuck on the fashion beat at a second-tier DC paper. If you can't tolerate talk of fabric or fashion or DC, then these books aren't for you. But if you can -- and especially if you love fabric -- pick up this series. mostly takes place out of DC, in the tiny town of Black Martin, VA. The plot centers around the only remaining velvet factory in Virginia -- possibly in the United States -- closing due to insufficient sales. Lacey shows up to write about the velvet industry and the factory's final days and finds herself part of the group who discovers yet another dead body -- this one dyed blue. I'll leave the rest for you to read.

Elisha (lishie) says

"After all, it was just the fashion beat. And a little extra." My favorite quote from the latest installment of Ellen Byerrum's Crime of Fashion series... The new book takes place in a small town (loved the setting) & brings to light another dying (pun intended) US industry- textile dyeing. I love Lacey Smithsonian's (Main Character, Fashion column journalist) quips, she makes me smile. Mystery, fashion, maybe even some romance ;) (after-all the story takes place during Valentine's week)... what more could I ask?

Angie says

FINALLY finished this today. It took awhile because it got pushed around while i was reading other books. That never would have happened if it had been more like the others in this series. I was so thrilled to see a new one after several years without! I was in the mood for a really easy to read but keeps me very interested story so I bought this for my kindle. I just have to say that overall I'm disappointed. It didn't hold my interest very well. This one had SO many references to the color blue and velvet I thought I might get sick if heard another. It just feels like she threw this one together without a lot of thought. It was lacking in many areas... Even Lacey and Vic have lost their magic! And just to clarify, I really loved several others in the series! It was ok. I just had hoped for more :)

May says

Oh Ellen, what happened?!

Lacy Smithsonian is a fashion reporter working in Washington DC. She favors vintage clothes, is smart, funny, and always falling into mysteries & murder. She's got strong opinions and her own particular quirks - and probably has been the mystery series I've enjoyed above all others. Yes, I've come to really enjoy her tales over the last few years.

This book, the latest in the series, was a painful disappointment. There really was no plot or twists (man found dead in velvet factory, people interviewed, murderer revealed), and there was not a single great scene or memorable moment outside the original crime scene.

So I ask again, Ellen Byerrum... what happened?! None of the charm, the interesting detail, the sense of urgency was here. It was dull, I had to make myself pick it up, and there was just nothing interesting or compelling about it. I find myself so disappointed.

Beverly says

Book Summary: Fashion reporter Lacey Smithsonian is touring a failing velvet factory in Virginia on its final day of operations-and finds one of the factory owners dead, lashed to a spool of velvet and soaked in blue dye. The workers are delighted, since they blamed the "Blue Devil" for killing their jobs.

But when another nickname, the "Velvet Avenger", makes the rounds, and ribbons of blue velvet start popping up, it could be more than Lacey's job at stake-it could be her life...

What I liked about the book: I am never disappointed when I read books from this series. I sometimes wish I was Lacy Smithsonian. When I was younger, I toyed with the idea of being a reporter. I even spent a summer as an intern on a newspaper in Texas' Rio Grande Valley. And I love vintage clothing. So for me personally, this book and the others in the series are a good reading fit.

In this installment Byerrum manages to provide an intriguing mystery while also acknowledging the economic downturn much of the nation is experiencing during the book's time frame. The characters surrounding Lacy also serve to make the story/series an entertaining read. From her love interest Vic Donovan to her annoying co-worker Felicity Pickles, you never know what Lacy is going to have to deal with. I just wonder if her editor Mac truly recognizes the gem he has working for him.

What I didn't like about the book: I liked it all.

If you enjoy mysteries, poking fun at D.C. residents, and are looking for some fashion tips, this is a series you don't want to miss. I can hardly wait to read the next installment *Death on Heels* which was released on February 7, 2012.

Karen says

I have read a couple of other *Crime of Fashion* mysteries and liked them as a pleasant diversion. I do like the main character, Lacey, and I love her wardrobe. I liked the facts about the velvet making process and how the American textile industry has declined. But despite the likable parts, I still wanted to give up on this one about halfway through. Ironically, the mystery was solved about halfway through the book as well -- I'm not sure why the author felt the need to stretch it out beyond that. Word count, maybe?

Aparna says

Stars: 3.5 / 5

Recommendation: An easy mystery read that is weaved through the world of fashion, style and dressing from the view point of a fashion stylist.

Shot Through Velvet is the seventh installment in the Crime of Fashion series by Ellen Byerrum published in February of 2011. The time around Lacey gets tangled with Velvet and Murder - obviously with lots of fashion clues.

Lacey Smithsonian, the fashion reporter for The Eye Street Reporter at Washington, D. C., is touring the last velvet factory in Virginia as part of her article on the vanishing U.S. Textile Industry. Dominion Velvet's general manager Tom Nicholson had assured her that the closure was temporary and there were huge plans for the factory's future. She was not aware that the plans included finding the very dead blue body of Rodney Gibbs a.k.a. the Blue Devil - part owner in the company; a partner - completely dripped in blue color hanging from the overhead dye house tied to spool of velvet that was incompletely dyed. Vic Donovan, the newly hired security consultant to Dominion Velvet, had tipped off Lacey of the factory's closure. Now, standing beside her, he has second thoughts on his decision of giving her the scoop as well as regrets that he had listened to the client in starting his job a day later.

Knowing Lacey, despite what Vic says, she rolls up her sleeve and sets on to solve the murder of the dead man who literally wore bluuuuue Velllll-vet - just like the song. To add to it she finds out that The Eye's publisher Claudia Darnell is a silent partner in the factory. People in Black Martin, Virginia and the workers at the factory feel that she helped pull the plug on them to close the factory. She felt some kind of animosity from the townsfolk towards Claudia. And the local reporter Will Adler, a constant by her side while investigating and who wanted to be the first on the case as well. Why was Rod Gibbs killed? What is the motive of the killer with all the blue velvet being left around the body? What is the role of Claudia in all this? Are the townsfolk right about her? Thus another adventure for Lacey begins, at least this time Vic was on her side for a change. Where does all this lead Lacey to? Well, read and find out. :)

Another good murder-mystery by Ellen with fashion clues. An easy read for those laze days. Enjoy the book and don't forget the fashion bites. Here's a snippet from Lacey's Fashion Bites.

Lacey Smithsonian's Fashion Bites: Shopping as an Art Form: Shop Early, Shop Often, Shop Well

Don't shop when you are too hungry or too full. Hunger makes you cranky and you'll grab the first thing you see. If you just packed in a huge meal, you will feel too fat to try on clothes. I recommend a light protein-packed breakfast or lunch. You can always take a coffee break.

Colleen says

This is the first Crime of Fashion that I've read and I'm happy I started with in because in looking at the reviews, this seems to be the worst of the series.

Aside from the cheesy character names and some of their over-the-top personalities (uhhh - Stella, anyone?). this was a cute little murder mystery that I enjoyed curling up with. At first, the names drove me nuts but then they started to amuse me, which I hope was the author's goal.

I'll definitely be reading the others in this series.

Mary Jensen says

This is one of those formula books where you think... surely I could do a better job than the author! My fault for checking it out of the library.

Clare Havens says

You can't go wrong with crime and fashion! A fabulous, fun book! Can't wait to read more in the series!

Kim says

Lacey does it again. This is was a quick read. I love the continuing development of the supporting cast. Stella, Brooke, and Vic are cooky in their own right and keep getting better. The mystery itself was pretty cut and dry, developing like any mystery should. Lacey did have another spectacular resolution catching the killer in a photo worthy way. And on a side note I have always had a love affair with velvet even though it isn't very practical in the desert. Fashion and murder hit a high note again.

Leya says

I enjoyed the book. It was nice to see the usual characters, I find that I get attached to them as much as I would the main character. Funny, isn't it? It's truly an ensemble performance that keeps me coming back for more.

I liked how the author is incorporating what is happening around us in the book, factory closures, newspapers going out of business, people losing their job because those jobs are going over seas. This is real stuff, but combined with the fiction it was very entertaining, and I was "glued" to book (whenever I could). I usually get a feeling on who the murderer is early in the book, but with this one I was completely surprised, and in the end it made sense.
